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Lessons on Prayer from the Holy Week

Introduction

The Crucifixion and Death of Christ was nothing but a **WARFARE** —

Eph 2:14-16 ... To *demolish* the partition wall
Col 2:14-15 ... To *disarm* the powers
Tit 2:14-15 ... To *deliver* us from iniquity
Heb 2:14-15 ... To *destroy* the devil

It was a battle between —

- God and Satan
- Good and Evil
- Seed of the Woman and Seed of the Serpent
- Heaven and Hell
- Spirit and Flesh
- Truth and Tradition
- God's Kingdom and the World

The battleground was the **Body** of Jesus —

Psa 129:3 ... *ploughing on My back!*

That's what Simeon told Mary

with Baby Jesus in his arms —

"A sword will pierce thro' your soul"
(Lk 2:35)

The Primary weapon Jesus used in the battle was **PRAYER**

- He prayed a long prayer **before** entering Gethsemane (Jn 17 & 18:1)
- He prayed a loud prayer **in** Gethsamane (Mt 26:36)

How about us?

Do we have this warfare today?

Yes! — *Green Tree* vs. *Dry Wood* (Lk 23:31)

— *Heavenlies* (Eph 6:12)

The underlying power to wield the weapons of Eph 6:13-17 is PRAYER (v18).

Prayer should become a way of life with us — not just an emergency call!

Illustrate: A little boy was sliding on a roof.

He cried, "God, save me" ...

After a few minutes he said, "Never mind, I'm caught on a nail!"

Step-knee treatment to God.

Seven Ingredients of Successful Praying:

Lessons from the Holy Week —

1. Faith

Mk 11:20-24 ... Cursing the fig tree

What Jesus did to the tree,
we can do to a mountain!

*"He who **believes** ... do greater things ..."* (Jn 14:12)

Mountain = Problems/Obstacles

God is bigger than our biggest problems!

Spies to Canaan —

Giants ... Grasshoppers ... God (Num 13:28-33)

Read the Bible again and again to know

the God of the Bible.

We need "faith for prayer"

and "prayer for faith"

eg) Jesus prayed for Peter's faith (Lk 22:32).

2. Forgiveness

Mk 11:25,26 (Immediately after teaching on Faith)

- The only conditional request in the Lord's Prayer is regarding "forgiveness" (Mt 6:12)
- "Confess your faults one to another and pray" (Js 5:16)
- The first of the two prayers of Jesus on the Cross —
"Father, forgive them ..."

Make a list of reconciliations to be made with people.
If we **retain** others' sins, God will not **remit** our sins!

If we hold grudge or harbour bitterness against anyone,
we are only hurting ourselves.

3. Watchfulness

= Alertness, Seriousness

x Casualness, Carelessness

Mt 26:41 ... *watch ... pray ...*

... Which means atleast

"One unhurried hour" (v40)

This comes by training (Jn 18:2)

It is **not** easy (Mt 26:41 ... *willing spirit x weak flesh*)

Is there an **Hour** of Prayer in your life?

Acts 3:1 (9th hour = 3 pm) ... *Peter and John*

Even when they were so busy with the addition of
3000 souls in a single day!

a) **Posture** in prayer —

This also speaks of seriousness.

Lying down ✕

Cross-legged ✕

Kneel! Jesus "*fell on His face*" and prayed (Mt 26:39).

b) **Place** of prayer —

Prayer means business with God.

Why be watchful? — God will speak to you.

Jesus said: *Lock up your room!* (Mt 6:6)

Switch off your mobilephone.

4. Yieldedness/Surrender

Mt 26:39,42,44 ... *Let Your will be done ...*

Strength comes after surrender (Lk 22:42,43)

- The First Adam failed in the Garden.
The Second Adam triumphed in the Garden.

There it was a temptation **to eat**;

Here it is a temptation **not to drink**.

- The last words of Christ were of surrender —
"Father, into Your hands ..."

It's always safer/better to fall into God's hands.

Choose God's way/God's will, though difficult —

1 Jn 5:14 ... *confidence ... His will ...*

The Word of God is the Will of God.

Saturate yourself with the Word of God.

Ezra — Nehemiah — Neh 9:3

6 hours + 6 hours

- Do not pray to satisfy your whims and fancies (Js 4:3,4)

Illustrate: A little boy prayed,

"Lord, make Kolkata the capital of Maharashtra
because that's what I wrote in the Geography exam!"

Prayer is not a **magic** to change God's will according to our
desire but a **means** to change our desires according to

God's will!

5. Tears (Brokenness/Contriteness)

Lk 23:26-28 ... *Weep for you and your children*

Jesus in tears ... Heb 5:7

Paul in tears ... Acts 20:19,31

Timothy in tears ... 2 Tim 1:4

Paul learnt this from Jesus, and Timothy from Paul.
Have you learnt “tears?”

We have no tears, so we have many fears!

Weepers are Winners!

(Nehemiah wept ... Ezra wept .. Esther fasted)

A man who kneels before God will stand before men!

Tears are precious to God (Psa 56:8)

Prayers in Book

Tears in Bottle

William Booth telegraphed to his associate workers
who were frustrated over fruitlessness: “Try Tears!”

Pray with tears for your **children** —

“Weep for your children” (Lam 2:18,19)

Their days are more difficult than ours.

6. Loneliness/Darkness

Prayer demands aloneness —

70 ... 12 ... 3 ... Alone! (Mt 26:36-39)

Mk 15:33,34 ... *Darkness ... My God, My God ...*

The central Cry of the Cross.

The secret of praying is praying in secret.

There will be times of darkness (Isa 50:10)

7. Boldness

Mk 15:37,38 ... *Veil in the Temple torn from top to bottom*

Heb 4:14-16

6:19,20 *Way into the Holiest now open*

No mediation of Mary or any priest or preacher!

Ask as a “son” would ask the father — (Mt 7:7-11)

“Abba, Father” (Rom 8:15)

To the Father **thro’** Jesus!

Let’s **stay** at the Throne of **Grace** today;

we will **share** the Throne of **Glory** tomorrow.

Then we’ll understand the old walltext —

“PRAYER BRINGS VICTORY!”

